

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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Fireworks Incident Data for 2007 Illegal Explosive Devices Top the List

There were 1,059 fireworks-related injuries and fires reported to the State Fire Marshal's Office in 2007, by fire departments and hospital emergency rooms. This is a 6% increase from the previous year's total of 1,001. Of the 1,059 reports received, there were 899 fires, and 160 injuries. These incidents most often occurred on July 4th. Most incidents were caused by males age 8-14. The incidents of greatest concern are:

- 38 Commercial fires totaling \$20.5 million in loss, 10 were caused by illegal devices, 4 were caused by legal devices and 24 were caused by an unknown type of fireworks device.
- In 2006, there were 17 school fires that totaled more than \$8 million in losses. In 2007, there were 8 school fires with minimal losses.
- 60 fires and 12 injuries were caused by bottle rockets which are illegal to own or possess in Washington State.
- 12 Sparkler Bomb incidents, 4 injuries to faces and hands, including partial amputation of fingers, and 8 fires/explosions. These devices are considered improvised explosive devices.
 - Making an improvised explosive device is a gross misdemeanor.
 - If property was damaged, it could be considered a property crime which is malicious mischief.
 - If used to blow up something, it could be considered a destructive device which is a felony.
 - If someone was hurt by the device, a person could be charged with bodily harm and assault, depending on intent.
 - Injuries from one of these devices include, metal puncture wounds with burning from the hot metal, burns and tearing to the hands and trauma to the face, chest and legs.

Supervision of kids 14 and under is critical in reducing emergency responses to fireworks incidents. Talk to your kids about fireworks and safety. Set family boundaries, only adults should light fireworks. Store fireworks in a secure location out of the reach and sight of curious children.

For more information about fireworks safety, public fireworks displays and the fireworks laws for your area, check the Celebrate Safely website at <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/fireworks>.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington State's firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.

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PREVENT FIRES
IT'S YOUR JOB!